

Kiln:

We currently have is a Skutt Kiln that is electrically operated. I will be firing every piece of work you create. Once the school years gets going and artwork is created I usually run 1 bisque fire and 1 glaze fire a week. Because there are certain firing guidelines, you must make sure each piece you create has met the guidelines in order for me to fire it. Refer to signs posted if you forget. The firing range that we use includes temperatures up to about 2000 degrees. Under no circumstance is any individual to put anything through the peepholes, open, or unload the kiln without my permission and help.

Kiln furniture, made from fireclay,
is very fragile and expensive to
replace.

Pottery Wheel:

To make perfectly symmetrical pottery pieces, it is important to use a pottery wheel. Pottery wheels come in two main varieties: electric and kick wheel. Electric pottery wheels are controlled with a switch or a pedal, much like a sewing machine. This year you will be using the pottery wheel to form many of your pots. Pieces that aren't made with the use of a pottery wheel are called hand-built instead of wheel thrown ware. The term "throwing on the wheel" comes from the old English word "Thrawan" which means a twisting or spinning action, which creates an end product.

Wedging Board:

This metal framed box is filled with plaster to allow clay to be wedged on. The plaster absorbs some of the moisture out of the clay during the wedging process, so it is a good idea to wedge clay that is a little moister than you would like to use. On one side a canvas mat covers the plaster to allow for more absorption while wedging extra wet clay. A metal wire is attached to the base and top of the board to allow potters to cut the clay in half to check for air bubbles.

Clay Mixer:

The clay mixer is intended to re-mix clay from scraps to save on time, energy and money. Wet scraps are combined with dry powdered clay to mix into moist clay for you to use. This is a nice piece of equipment, but also contains very sharp blades that mix up the clay. Students are not allowed to operate or get clay out of the mixer. I will mix up the clay and empty the mixer.

Scrap-buckets:

Scraps of “Unfired” clay only go into the scrap buckets. Do not put any other materials (paper towels, pencils, clay tools, etc) into the scrap bucket, as scraps will be made into workable clay. Bone-dry clay will melt down in the watery slip. If you ever need any clay slip, this would be a good place to get some.

Clay Barrel

We use this rather large garbage can to hold good, useable clay to work with for Ceramics class. To insure that the clay stays moist, put the garbage sacks back in the bucket on top and make sure the lid is on tight. Only put soft moist clay back in this bucket if you want “good” clay to work with. If clay scraps are too dry or too wet from wheel throwing, put them in the scrap buckets.

Smaller Clay Tools

Needle Tool: The sharp needle is firmly set in aluminum handle, which is finely textured to provide a firm grip for wet hands. This tool may be used to cut heavy clay strips, to cut designs in clay, and to put holes in clay.

Cut off wires or Toggle Cutters:

This tool is used for slicing and cutting lump clay. It also works well for cutting pots and other items off of the bat after thrown on the wheel. Harwood 3" toggle handles are firmly fastened to approximately 18" of fine quality stainless steel.

Metal Scraper or Rib:

This tool is used for shaping, smoothing, and trimming pottery shapes. These are made from thin, flexible spring stainless steel.

Rubber Scraper or Rib:

This kidney shaped rubber tool is used for smoothing, shaping, and finishing pottery pieces.

Wooden Rib:

This tool is made from smooth-finished, imported hardwood.

This type of tool is used to employ the basic shapes required for opening, shaping, curving, smoothing, and trimming wet clay on the potter's wheel.

Modeling Tools:

Handcrafted tools are made from wood where as molded ones are made out of plastic. They are used for cutting, slicing, smoothing, contouring and pattern decorating in soft clay.

Ribbon Tools:

These tools come in different shapes and sizes for light cutting, trimming, and slicing. The ends are formed from clock-spring steel and are firmly attached to the handles with brass ferrules.

Ribbon Sculpting Tool Set:

These miniature sculpting tools are made of fine ribbon steel treated for maximum strength and are just the answer for fine sculpting, detailing, and trimming.

Loop Tools:

These tools are used to remove larger controlled amounts and shapes of clay from wheel thrown pieces and clay sculpture pieces. The shaped cutting heads are made from heavy stainless steel ribbon with sharpened edges. Rugged hardwood handles provide a sure grip and allow easy manipulation of these tools in wet clay or leather-hard clay.

Double Wire End Tool:

A double wire tool that is made from high-strength stainless steel is firmly attached to hardwood handles with brass ferrules. Designed for medium duty cutting and slicing of clay as the edges are more rounded and blunt.

Eraser / Wipe Out Tool:

Soft rubber tip at both ends makes this tool easy to smooth and get into tiny spaces on your wet clay or leather-hard clay piece.

Rolling Pin or Clay Rollers:

Clay is quickly and easily rolled to the proper thickness with this tool. Made with either 2 wooden handles on both sides or one metal handle, both rollers are made from smooth hardwood.

Decorative Rolling Pins:

Wooden rolling pin tool, that works well for imprinting designs into clay projects.

Bisque Fired Clay Stamps:

These fired clay stamps work well for imprinting designs into your clay pieces. You can easily design your own by carving, pressing, molding clay into something. Once fired then you can either press clay into the stamp and pull out to add to a piece or use the stamp to press it onto a larger piece.

Wood Strips:

Clay thickness strips for rolling uniform thickness slabs of clay.

Strips made from kiln dried wood.

24 inches long strips vary in size thickness from 1/8", 1/4" 3/8", and 1/2".

Greenware File:

A lightweight, flexible and washable file is an easily held tool for cleaning ceramic and porcelain greenware as well as wet cleaning low fire porcelain. Its flexibility allows the tool to follow the contour of the greenware for cleanly finished pieces and the coarse side of the tool will take down seam lines. It will also remove most gouges and pits.

Drywall Sandpaper:

Silicon carbide mesh cloth not only works well for sanding drywall but for clay as well. The open whole square design makes it tough for even clay to clog. For best results use only on bone-day ware with a light touch.

Jeweler's File:

This metal file allows ceramists to file small areas of a bisque fired or glazed fired piece. For ceramics, this tool works best for widening holes of bisque fired ware. Be careful when using this tool, as a bisque fired piece is very fragile and shards of broken ware can be sharp.

Camelhair Brush:

This tool is made out of natural fine camel hair and used for the application of glaze on a bisque fired clay piece.

Multi-stem Japanese Hake Brush:

This brush allows you to put a lot of glaze on evenly on your piece at one time before it dries.

Slip or Glaze Trailing Bottle:

This easy to squeeze container is used by potters and ceramists to trail slips and glazes into tiny areas.

Plastic Bag:

Used to wrap your project in to avoid drying out or to put your finished ware in to take home. Drape loosely around your piece to allow wet projects to slowly dry out. Wrap projects tightly to insure ware from drying out and to allow for future work to be done on the piece.

Paper Towels:

These work well for cleaning up messes as well as useful to keep a piece moist. To prevent a piece from drying out over a longer weekend dampen paper towels and wrap around your project before you wrap a plastic bag around.

Water Spray Bottle

This is a useful tool to help keep your project moist. To prevent your project from drying out or to add extra moisture to your piece, spray your project with water, wrap wet paper towels around the piece, and put a plastic bag tightly around the piece.

Canvas Mat

Use this to help keep your project from sticking to the table when rolling out a slab or to keep from cutting the table when cutting clay.

Sponges:

There are many different types of sponges from man made synthetic sponges to natural sponges grown in the ocean. We will use different types of sponges in Ceramics class. Some will more useful in helping with cleaning up, others for wheel throwing or applying glaze.

Apron:

To keep from getting your clothes dirty, put this on over them. It serves multiple purposes.

Bat:

This round plate fits on the wheel head to allow for the potter to throw a pot and easily remove the piece without distorting it.

Aluminum Modeling Wheel:

All-aluminum wheel is excellent for modeling, finishing and decorating. 7" head moves smoothly on a ball bearing. Accurately marked with circles for sizing.